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# THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

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*THE Secret Doctrine teaches that the whole universe is ruled by intelligent and semi-intelligent Forces and Powers. Christian Theology admits and even enforces belief in such, but makes an arbitrary division and refers to them as "Angels" and "Devils." Science denies the existence of such, and ridicules the very idea. The Occultists and Kabalists are thus the only rational expounders of the ancient traditions, which have now culminated in dogmatic faith on the one hand, and dogmatic denials on the other.*

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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Do not wish to be rare like jade, or common like stone. —*Tao Te King*

# THEOSOPHY

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## ON UNDERSTANDING H. P. B.

IT is often said that the only path to understanding H. P. Blavatsky is through understanding her philosophy. "Biographies," while of subordinate interest, cannot throw much light on the character of H.P.B., and may, on the other hand, cause considerable confusion, because of the human tendency to form judgments on incomplete evidence. And the evidence we have on this mysterious subject is *of necessity* incomplete. The mystery of H.P.B. is the mystery of human development: to solve one, we must solve the other.

For a clear if not exactly "simple" setting of the problem, there is the following statement by William Q. Judge, made in his article, "The Synthesis of Occult Science":

> The scope and bearing of philosophy itself are hardly yet appreciated by modern thought, because of its materialistic tendency. A complete science of metaphysics and a complete philosophy of science are not yet even conceived of as possible; hence the ancient wisdom by its vastness has escaped recognition in modern times. That the authors of ancient wisdom have spoken from at least two whole planes of conscious experience beyond that of our every-day "sense-perception" is to us inconceivable, and yet such is the fact; and why should the modern advocate of evolution be shocked and staggered by such a disclosure?

The point of interest to Theosophical students, here, is not only that it would be a mistake to "interpret" H.P.B. and her life in the terms of "our every-day 'sense-perception'," and so miss entirely the meanings which are accessible only on the two higher planes of conscious experience referred to, but, also, that attempts to give an account of her according to *suppositions* about the consciousness of those planes may

prove equally misleading. The wisdom of occultists is needed to explain the realities of those planes to persons who have no normal experience of them. Only the egotism of ignorance and inexperience permits ordinary persons to try to "explain" H.P.B. A similar objection applies to pretentious "study classes" in *The Secret Doctrine* and other highly occult treatises.

The historical consequences of misguided attempts at explaining what *cannot* be explained in familiar terms include all the sectarian religions and the stultifying conventions of so-called "spiritual" teachings. The persisting question which produces this effect is the same as that addressed by Arjuna to Krishna in the second chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*:

> What, O Keshava, is the description of that wise and devoted man who is fixed in contemplation and confirmed in spiritual knowledge? What may such a sage declare? Where may he dwell? Does he move and act like other men?

Krishna, who has knowledge, makes answer to this question, but it continues to be asked, with unceasing interest and curiosity. There is nothing wrong in the question, of course. What makes trouble is the acceptance of inadequate answers—answers from those less informed than Krishna. Inevitably, the mind of the disciple runs before him, wondering about the heights of spiritual achievement. And just as inevitably, if the disciple has not learned the lesson of patience, of being "content with fate," he imagines, in *psychic* terms, the nature and character of adeptship. The spiritual, in short, is transformed into the psychic, and then, as H.P.B. herself has put it, "dire results ensue."

This is the law which overtook all those who felt themselves competent to "judge" H.P.B. and to determine what she "ought" to have done and where she made "mistakes." These critics had formed preconceived notions of how one who is wise should behave, and held to them without having wisdom themselves.

Romantic dreams and moralizing judgments of others all belong to the psychic nature. It is here, in the unreliable, plastic stuff of the *psyche,* that sectarian delusions are formed. Both the feelings and the intellect are susceptible to these delusions. Strong feelings of psychic inclination are mistaken for the power of "devotion," while reasoning from premises which are themselves misconceptions produces conclusions of spurious certainty.

To know what to do, or how to act, in any situation, requires a working knowledge of the situation and a deep understanding of Karmic law. When an ordinary man finds himself obliged to decide what is right for another to do, he is usually the subject of two extraordinary delusions: First, that he has the capacity—the knowledge and insight, that is—to make such a decision; and second, that one who has this capacity would *want* to make it for or about another. The adepts, he forgets, are distinguished by their absolute refusal to make decisions of this sort.

Every student does indeed find it necessary to reach out in his imagination to find the answer to such questions for himself—to know, with as much certainty as he can obtain, what *he* should do. The inner life of the disciple is a life of endless mould-breaking, for the truly spiritual decision is forever new. No "habit" can guide the wondering disciple, no "rule" discover to him the path he seeks. It is of the nature of spiritual action to be beyond all habits, to be the cause, but not the consequence, of rules. In the life of the disciple, there is a constant attempt to shape the psychic to what is imagined to be spiritual. And since the psychic is of the nature of matter, with the tendency to run to form, each shaping sets a precedent, and each precedent tends to produce a preoccupation. It is these, the preconceptions, which the disciple must continually destroy, until, at last, the psychic has lost all trace of autonomy, all basis for independent action—until, as H.P.B. said, the personality is *paralyzed* and incapable of the judgments which delude and lead astray.

It is this *psychic* mind of which the *Voice of the Silence* says, "Let the disciple slay the slayer." This same mind is referred to by Mr. Judge, in his commentary on Patanjali:

> . . . when the internal organ, the mind, is through the senses affected or modified by the form of some object, the soul also—viewing the object through its organ, the mind—is, as it were, altered into that form; as a marble statue of snowy whiteness, if seen under a crimson light will seem to the beholder crimson and so is, to the visual organs, so long as that colored light shines upon it.

The perception of the adept is perception without any coloration—in which the modifications of the thinking principle have been hindered from exerting an influence. It is this wholly impartial perception which may be spoken of as "spiritual." Who has it, short of the adepts, the perfected men?

One great purpose of the Theosophical Movement—and therefore, of H.P.B.—is to rescue the aspirations of mankind from the "multi-coloured dogmas of the churches," which have been erected upon misunderstood psychic impressions of ancient spiritual truths. H.P.B. did not so much "declare" those truths anew, as she gave full account of how they are to be had for every man by himself. The distinctive character of the work launched in the nineteenth century was in this, that every man might now begin to become his own teacher and "revealer." As H.P.B. said in "Is Theosophy a Religion?":

> The "Secret Doctrine"—a work which gives out all that can be given out during this century, is an attempt to lay bare *in part* the common foundation and inheritance of all—great and small religious and philosophical schemes. It was found indispensable to tear away all this mass of concreted misconceptions and prejudice which now hides the parent trunk of (*a*) all the great world-religions; (*b*) of the smaller sects; and (*c*) of Theosophy as it stands now—however veiled the great Truth, by ourselves and our limited knowledge. . . .

H.P.B.'s public work, no doubt, was once again to place the doctrines of the Wisdom Religion before the world. But the *esoteric* task she undertook—esoteric because hidden from all those who read with the eye of sense—was to provide the means for individuals to acquire an immunity to sectarian error, or psychic delusion. To this end, she explained, as well as she could, the laws of inner growth, and laid down certain inviolable principles to be followed by all those who would attempt to *live* by principle.

It is this double purpose, perhaps, which is sometimes a source of confusion—a confusion she attempted to deal with in "Philosophers and Philosophicules," and in other articles. The teachings and doctrines, in their nineteenth-century presentation, were intended, we may think, to "leaven the mind of the race," to establish a "coloration" more hospitable to perception of the principles of things. But truth itself, she made quite plain, is a matter of *self-discovery,* and this was promised only to those who would undertake the regimen which self-discovery involves.

Only those for whom knowledge of the adepts and of the powers of spiritual perception is no longer hear-say, no longer an object of hope and wonder, are in a position to "explain" H.P.B. This they have not attempted.

# CHARACTER SKETCHES OF MADAME BLAVATSKY

(*Concluded*)

AT this stage my own acquaintance with her began in 1879. Her troubles at this time were all before her, and they had not yet begun to depress her naturally buoyant spirits. Her friends of recent date have only known her weakened by illness, somewhat embittered and disheartened by calumny, contumely, and misrepresentation; almost sternly bent on preaching the lofty ethics of the Theosophic code, and drifting into a position in which, as the recognised spiritual chief of so many earnest followers, she was hardly able to divest herself of a quasipapal character. When the movement she set on foot was still in its infancy, she was burdened by none of these oppressive circumstances. Her bright intellect and abundant wit made her a charming conversationalist, and many people, I am sure, who met her at Allahabad in the year just mentioned, will remember her chiefly as a very delightful companion at the dinner table, full of sparkling and eccentric anecdotes, and only unconventional enough to be an amusing feature of any gathering she joined. For she would never allow herself the strong language in which she sometimes indulged when any but intimate friends were present.

As I have said in describing her as she was at this period in the book already referred to: "No one with the least discernment could ever fail to see that her rugged manners and disregard of all conventionalities were the result of a deliberate rebellion against, not of ignorance or unfamiliarity with, the customs of refined society. Still, the rebellion was often very determined, and she would sometimes colour her language with expletives of all sorts, some witty and amusing, some unnecessarily violent, that we should all have preferred her not to make use of. She certainly had none of the superficial attributes one might have expected in a spiritual teacher: and how she could at the same time be philosopher enough to have given up the world for the sake of spiritual advancement, and yet be capable of going into frenzies of passion about trivial annoyances, was a profound mystery to us for a long while, and is only now partially explainable within my own mind, by some information I have received relating to curious psychological

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NOTE.—The first part of this article by Mr. A. P. Sinnett appeared in THEOSOPHY for April.

laws under which initiates in occult mysteries, circumstanced as she, inevitably come. By slow degrees only, and in spite of herself—in spite of injudicious proceedings on her part, that long kept alive suspicions she might easily have allayed if she could have kept calm enough to understand them—did we come to appreciate the reality of the occult forces and unseen agencies behind her; . . . but guests, especially if they happened to be of a very materialistic temperament, would regard anything Madame Blavatsky might do of an apparently abnormal character as so much juggling, and hardly disguise these impressions from her. The result in such cases would be a stormy end to our evening after guests had gone. To be suspected as an impostor, deluding her friends with trickery, would sting her at any time with a scorpion smart, and bring forth a flood of passionate argument as to the cruelty and groundlessness of such an imputation.

"Recollection of this time supplies me with a very varied assortment of memory portraits of Madame taken during different conditions of her nerves and temper. Some recall her flushed and voluble, too loudly declaiming against some person or other who had misjudged her or her Society; some show her quiet and companionable, pouring out a flood of interesting talk about Mexican antiquities, or Egypt and Peru, showing a knowledge of the most varied and far-reaching kind, and a memory for names and archaeological theories she would be dealing with, that was fairly fascinating to her hearers. Then, again, I remember her telling anecdotes of her own earlier life, mysterious bits of adventure, or stories of Russian society, with so much point, vivacity, and finish that she would simply be the delight for the time being of every one present."

At this time Madame Blavatsky's own home was established at Bombay, where she resided with Colonel Olcott and two or three persons Indian and European, associated with the Theosophical Society. At first she lived in a comfortless native quarter of the town, but afterwards at a small bungalow called "The Crow's Nest," at Beach Candy, which had long been unoccupied owing to a bad reputation for snakes and ghosts, and was let to the Theosophists, quite willing to brave all encumbrances of this sort, on reasonable terms. The building lay on the slope of a steep hill, and the upper part, an enclosed verandah with two or three rooms opening out of it, constituted Madame Blavatsky's quarters. Here I visited her in 1881, and found her immersed in a

constant ebb and flow of native visitors, members of the Society and others. She would have admiring groups of such friends around her up to all hours in the evening, smoking innumerable cigarettes and talking Vedic philosophy with eager enthusiasm, or as eagerly and excitedly discussing some trumpery little incident connected with the progress or difficulties of the Society, or the misdoings of some "enemy," which a person of cooler temperament in her position would have found too insignificant to engage five minutes' thought. But Madame seemed to have had no sense of the proportion of things, and the annoyance of the moment, whatever it was, would always fill her whole horizon. And then, if I may again quote a few words from my own former account of her, "in the midst of some fiery argument with a Pundit about a point of modern Hindoo belief that she might protest against as inconsistent with the real meaning of the Vedas, or a passionate remonstrance with one of her 'aides' of the *Theosophist* about something done amiss that would for the time overspread the whole sky of her imagination with a thundercloud, she would perhaps suddenly 'hear the voice they did not hear'—the astral call of her distant Master, or one of the other 'Brothers' as by that time we had all learned to call them—and forgetting everything else in an instant, she would hurry off to the seclusion of any room where she could be alone for a few moments, and hear whatever message or orders she had to receive."

She would make no efforts at this time to cultivate friendly relations with the European society of the place, having started indeed with a very flourishing stock of misconceptions about the character of the English in India, which gave way after a time, but at first made her fancy herself—by reason of her special sympathy with the natives—as necessarily antagonistic to the Europeans. Moreover, she hated the outer forms and ceremonies of Anglo-Indian life, and would have found it a terrible penance to give up the loose wrappers she habitually wore, or the cigarettes she constantly smoked, for the sake of commonplace parties and people who knew nothing of the Vedas, and still less of the mysterious occultism in which all her deeper interests were rooted. However, it is none the less true that she did fret after a time at the isolation as regards European society, in the midst of which she lived at Bombay, and she used thoroughly to enjoy the change in this respect she obtained from time to time during her visits to Allahabad and Simla. At Simla especially she made many friends, and during the

summer of 1880 she was perhaps the prominent feature of the Anglo-Indian season, for that was the year of her most sensational performances, as described in *The Occult World,* and though, of course, accounts of these no sooner began to penetrate the newspapers than they evoked outcries of ridicule and incredulity, a great many people at the time—including some very prominent members of the English community who apostatised afterwards, when the tide of scornful public incredulity set in strongly—were altogether overwhelmed by the marvels of which they were personally witness.

Up to this time we had received no glimmerings of the comprehensive or systematic teaching concerning the evolution of man and the world, and the laws governing the spiritual progress of humanity, which ultimately identified the Theosophical Society with something resembling a new religion. So far Madame Blavatsky's efforts had been altogether directed to establishing the broad fact that there were people in existence whose knowledge and power transcended those of ordinary mortals; that they correspond in the present day to the initiated hierophants of ancient religious systems; that some touch with the superior wisdom they possessed was to be got at through the study of Indian sacred literature; and that Western communities, in so far as they had begun to investigate abnormal super-physical phenomena by means of the practices resorted to by "spiritualists," were altogether on a wrong track. Many modern newspaper writers are so densely ignorant of everything that appertains to this investigation, that they not only mix up the silly, fraudulent imitations of spiritualistic phenomena with the real occurrences, such as they are, to which scores of eminent and entirely credible inquirers have borne testimony, but also confuse these occurrences—the central block of real experience connected with spiritualism—with the theories of occult science, as these have been gradually developed in recent years through Madame Blavatsky's agency and others which she in the first instance set in motion.

It is only necessary here to explain occult teaching sufficiently to make her Theosophical work intelligible; and her attitude towards spiritualism will be made apparent when I say that the occultist's view of nature recognises a plane of phenomena and existence directly in contact with our own, though imperceptible to commonplace physical senses, in which the inferior remnants of post-mortem humanity float about and persist for a time, while the true Ego or spiritual conscious-

ness of every departed soul fit to have anything worth calling a spiritual life, passes off into realms with which the mediumship of the spiritualist has, as a general rule, no contact whatever.

From the first moment when Madame Blavatsky completed the apprenticeship of her wandering life and came back to Europe in 1870, at the close of three years spent in Eastern seclusion—of which it is useless to speak except to persons knowing something of what occult initiation means—she regarded herself as especially bound to combat and oppose the spiritualistic movement, not from the ignorant and stupid point of view of those who regard the whole thing as a vulgar fraud, but from that of the inner penetralia of the movement itself. No one knew better than she that the phenomena of the spiritualists were often entirely genuine, but she felt herself in possession of knowledge which the most earnest spiritualists were entirely without, which enabled her to go behind the phenomena and explain them as originating from super-physical causes, quite unlike those to which they were assigned by spiritualists.

To wean the spiritualists from their misconceptions was thus the real motive of the very first step she took—at Cairo, in 1870—in the direction of Theosophical work. She founded a little society for investigating spiritualistic phenomena, and of course this action on her part was twisted later on by her detractors into the statement that she began her public career as a spiritualistic medium. Her letters to private friends written about this time and later on from New York—whither she migrated a year or two afterwards—amply establish her bitter antagonism from the first to the whole theory of modern spiritualism, so that the charge against her that she practised as a spiritualist medium is a ludicrous inversion of the facts.

Greatly promoted by the dogged determination and single-minded exertions of Colonel Olcott, the Theosophical Society grew rapidly during the years Madame Blavatsky spent at Bombay. Of course her excitable temperament and strangely defective judgment as regards the prosaic business of life were always leading "the old lady"—as she came to be called at this time by her most intimate and affectionate friends—into hot water of all kinds, and she was always at war with some newspaper assailant whom she would more wisely have ignored. However, in India there was no reason why the Society should not grow. In this country [England] a certain readiness to brave conven-

tional opinion is still required by people who attach themselves to a movement resting on special knowledge and experience not yet hall-marked by orthodox authority, but in India there was nothing in Madame Blavatsky's profession of belief in the existence of and acquaintance with occult initiates to offend public opinion. A similar conviction is so widely spread as to be general throughout India, while the whole programme of the Theosophical Society, in its exaltation of the importance of Indian literature and traditions, was flattering to native susceptibilities. So wherever Colonel Olcott wandered in the course of his incessant tours, he found it easy to establish branches of the Society, and these were counted by hundreds when the Theosophical household moved at the end of 1882 to Madras. A comfortable house had been purchased there by subscription for the use of the Society and the central household, and here Madame Blavatsky assured me, when I visited her on my way home from India in 1883, she had found her final resting place, and meant to abide quietly for the remainder of her life. Her foresight at that time did not enable her to anticipate in imagination the troubles and triumphs that still awaited her, nor the many removals yet in store for her.

Here are some extracts from a characteristic letter she wrote to my wife and myself in 1884, when she had come Londonwards as far as Nice for the sake of the sea voyage, being in a thoroughly bad state of health:

> I have received the kind invitations of yourselves and of _____ and _____ and others. I am deeply touched by this proof of the desire to see my unworthy self, but see no use to kick against fate and try to make the realisable out of the unrealisable. I am sick, and feel worse than I felt when leaving Bombay. At sea I had felt better, and on land I feel worse. I was laid up for the whole day on first landing at Marseilles, and am laid up now. At the former place it was, I suppose, the vile emanations of a European civilised first-class hotel, with its pigs and beef, and here—well, anyhow I am falling to pieces, crumbling away like an old sea-biscuit, and the most I will be able to do will be to pick up and join together my voluminous fragments, and, gluing them together, carry the ruins to Paris. What's the use of asking me to London? What shall I, what can I, do amidst your eternal fogs and the emanations of the highest civilisation? What kind of company am I to civilised beings like yourselves? I would become obnoxious to them in seven minutes and a quarter were I to accept it and land my disagreeable bulky self in England. Distance lends its charms, and in my case my presence would surely ruin every vestige of it.

In spite of this reluctance, the intense interest she felt in the progress of the Theosophical movement in London, and the continued pressure of her friends' wishes, brought her over to London eventually, after a few weeks spent in Paris. At whatever house she stayed, her presence becoming known drew crowds of visitors anxious to see her. The constant ebb and flow of people round her never seemed to weary her. Ill as she often was, her nervous energy was inexhaustible, and she flung herself now into the task of promoting a Theosophical propaganda in Europe as if that were the final culmination of her work to which everything else was subordinate. No one ever more than Madame Blavatsky acted on the principle of doing with all her might whatever work she was engaged upon at the moment.

But a terrible catastrophe was brewing for her all this while. A magazine published at Madras in the interest of the missionary body at that place—always bitterly inimical to the Theosophical movement, which tended to exalt native confidence in the Oriental philosophies and religions which it was the missionaries' business to attack—obtained from a woman who had been attached to the Theosophical headquarters as a kind of housekeeper (and whom Madame Blavatsky had very unwisely treated as a friend), certain letters purporting to be written by Madame, the contents of which seemed to show that some of the abnormal phenomena that had taken place at Madras and elsewhere had been fraudulently concocted by Madame Blavatsky with the assistance of the ex-housekeeper and her husband. The authenticity of these letters was strenuously denied by Madame Blavatsky; but the Psychical Research Society sent out an agent to investigate the whole imbroglio. Mr. Hodgson, the agent in question, was entirely won over in the end by the accusing side, and published a report condemning Madame Blavatsky unreservedly. A complete review of this disagreeable business would take up too much time.

Volumes have been written about it, and while at first no doubt the leaders of the Psychical Research Society undoubtedly accepted Mr. Hodgson's view, the few people who had been intimate with Madame Blavatsky all through the period of the transactions referred to, showed by degrees, in various pamphlets and articles, how worthless Mr. Hodgson's conclusions were, how fatally he had been hoodwinked by the enemies of the Theosophical movement at Madras, and how narrow-minded and unjust his methods of enquiry had been. To the present

day, of course, people who are out of touch with the deep realities of the Theosophical movement—which, however completely its origin may be traced to Madame Blavatsky's efforts, had long since acquired a momentum and interior justification of its own quite independent of her personality—are vaguely of opinion that Madame Blavatsky was somehow exposed by the Hodgson report, and that the continued regard and respect shown for her by a large Society is an unaccountable manifestation of human credulity. But, nevertheless, no one ever lived down all injurious accusation more effectively than Madame Blavatsky, before she died, lived down the apparently at the time overwhelming denunciation of the Psychical Research Committee.

It was a tremendous blow at the time, of course. She returned to India at the end of 1884, while Mr. Hodgson was carrying on his investigations there; but that gentleman never sought her explanations of the circumstances he thought suspicious, never showed her the originals of the letters on which the whole accusation turned, and disguised his unfavourable conclusions while staying as a guest at the Theosophical headquarters. Then she fell very ill again, nearly died—was in fact given over by the doctor in attendance upon her—but unexpectedly rallied, and when a little better again returned to Europe, where, however, at the time her star seemed to have set entirely, and many of the people who had exhibited a spasmodic enthusiasm for her and her teachings in 1884, fell off both from the number of her friends and from the movement.

She wrote from Naples to my wife, in June 1885, soon ofter landing:

> The sight of your familiar handwriting was a welcome one, indeed, and the contents of your letter still more so. No, dear Mrs. Sinnett, I never thought that *you* could have ever believed that I played the tricks I am now accused of, neither you nor any one of those who have Masters in their hearts, nor on their brains. Nevertheless, here I am to stand accused, without any means to prove the contrary, of the most dirty, villainous deceptions ever practised by a half-starved medium. What can I and what shall I do? Unless to either write to persuade and try to argue with people who are bound to believe me guilty to change their opinions. Let it be. The fuel in my heart is burnt to the last atom. Henceforth nothing is to be found in it but cold ashes. I have so suffered that I can suffer no more.

This tone of despair was very unnatural to her, and in the dejection of the moment she underrated her own reserves of strength and courage. At Wurzburg, where she settled down for a time, old friends found

their way to her again, one by one. She had fallen out of fashion, it was true, but for all who had got upon the track of the great principles she had been instrumental in interpreting, realms of interest lay before them which would equally have drawn them on, even if Madame Blavatsky had been as personally unworthy of respect as her worst enemies declared. But in truth the more any Theosophist has at any time become attached, through experiences or mere reasoning of his own, to the pursuit of occult knowledge and development, the better he has been able to appreciate Madame Blavatsky's career as a whole, without worrying about petty scraps of evidence seeming to impugn the bona fides of this or that little manifestation of abnormal energy among the hundreds or thousands of those with whom she has been concerned. That in his most seemingly injurious discoveries Mr. Hodgson had altogether blundered, became, for all who learned to appreciate the Theosophic position, a thousand times more probable than that Madame Blavatsky was otherwise than genius throughout—as most certainly a great many Theosophists of their own knowledge knew her to be in regard to her general relations with what I have called the Occult World.

So finally it came to pass that Madame Blavatsky, having grown very tired of her isolation at Wurzburg, moved for a change to Ostend, and after staying on there till the spring of 1887, was brought back to London by the earnest invitation of a Theosophical group, by whose care and forethought the journey—very difficult for her state of health—was facilitated by every arrangement that could be made for her comfort. Norwood, where she stayed for a few months, then became the vortex of Theosophical meetings and activities of various kinds, and afterwards several members of the Society joined together in taking a house in Lansdowne Road, Notting Hill, where "H.P.B.'s" banner was set up very proudly, and everything done by all parties concerned to emphasise in the most unequivocal way their devotion and trust in the leader, whom the outer world vainly imagined to have been crushed entirely by the much-talked-of Report.

"H.P.B.," I may explain, was the simple designation by which Madame Blavatsky came to be known and addressed henceforth in the Society in accordance with her own wish. From this time on, the few remaining years of her life have seen her personal ascendancy and influence with all around her constantly increasing. Her receptions have

been crowded, her spirits and energy have recovered their old vigour, schemes of all kinds have been set on foot around her for pushing on the Theosophical movement, and a practical answer has been afforded to critics who suppose that the interest Madame Blavatsky excites turns on the "phenomena," genuine or otherwise, which have been so much talked of in connection with her, by the fact that in these last few years her public energies have been entirely bent on teaching Theosophical philosophy and ethics, and no casual frequenter of her receptions or lecture room has ever been encouraged to expect the smallest manifestation of occult mysteries.

In spite of this, as teacher and philosopher Madame Blavatsky has been more closely surrounded by eager admirers than at any time in the past as a wonderworker. She has been working more productively, moreover, than ever before as a writer. Besides a constant stream of articles in the monthly magazines she edited, she has published, during her final residence in England, the two bulky volumes known as *The Secret Doctrine,* and has written as much more, which she designed to publish eventually in the shape of two more volumes added to that book. She has also published *The Key to Theosophy,* and a little book of great interest for occult students, called *The Voice of the Silence.* Idleness never had any charms for her, and she had to be very ill indeed before she would tear herself from her writing-table and surrender herself to her bed.

This irresistible force or energy in her nature is the clue to a comprehension of her, as far as it is possible to understand her without explicit reference to the "occult world" from which her power, knowledge, and influence were really derived. She always, as it were, filled every place she occupied. She dominated every situation in which she was placed, and she had to be either greatly loved or greatly hated by those whom she came in contact with. She could never be an object of indifference. For people even who quarreled with her and shunned her she remained an important fact. People who knew her were always talking her over; and even though in some cases she might give offence and exasperate friends for a time, these would generally in the long run be found amongst the number of her friends once more. She was more interesting than even she could be irritating.

And now the generation she has lived with is left face to face with the mass of literature she has left behind her, with the great scheme of

philosophy, at the same time a vast and coherent system of thought, interpreting Nature and Man, which has been elaborated under her guidance—by herself or others in co-operation with her; and with nothing countervailing this tremendous bequest but some trumpery imputations on the bona fides of a few among the endless series of marvels which have always been taking place around her, in all countries and amongst endlessly various people, all her life—imputations, moreover, which have been in themselves discredited and refuted for those who take the trouble to read both sides of that wearisome story. To discuss Madame Blavatsky at this stage of the proceedings, with reference to a single petty controversy about a single episode in her extraordinary career, would be like criticising some great picture with exclusive reference to the smell of the paint. It was exasperating that Madame Blavatsky could blunder so horribly as she constantly did in the choice of confidants and companions, and in the mismanagement of her extraordinary faculties. Her spiritual insight and clairvoyant gifts were compatible with a total inability to judge character in the ordinary way. Thus she was always flinging herself into the arms of people whom she had ultimately to reckon among the hosts of her "enemies," and she would often put a heavy strain on the patience of others who would have been her staunch allies if she could only have appreciated them aright. But however far such comments might be carried, the broad fact remains that Madame Blavatsky's influence in the world for good, directly and indirectly, has been world-wide, and that views of Nature and spiritual evolution which are distinctly traceable for those who understand them to the impulse given out by Theosophical writings, are fermenting in modern society to an extent that bids fair to accomplish serious and important modifications of religious thinking.

She was a wild, strange creature in many external ways, and to understand her aright and reconcile her roughness and failings with her grand spiritual afflatus is to comprehend the workings of her "Karma" and the principles guiding the rulers of the initiated hierarchy to which she was attached. It would be vain to attempt an exposition of such mysteries, except to those who have already profited to the utmost by the opportunities which contact with "H.P.B." may have afforded them. But at all events, it is easy now to leave all her eccentricities out of account—except in so far as most of those who personally knew her will remember them with affection—and to turn the tide of thought

which she has set flowing around us to the stupendous revival of forgotten knowledge concerning the possibilities of spiritual initiation which she has accomplished. For the majority of us, as yet, silly badinage respecting some of her occult faculties and doings, and unworthy suspicions, have obscured the whole subject; and the grandest metaphysical and scientific theories which are lurking amongst us at the present day are ignored by conventional orthodoxy because they are for the moment associated with a name defiled by vulgar accusations. But if ever there was a case in which petty spite might silence itself in the presence of death, surely this before us is one; and by the time all existing personalities of the Theosophical movement have been forgotten, a more spiritually-minded generation than ours will perhaps look back with a respect that current opinion may not yet have the foresight to entertain, on the more than extraordinary career and character I have been endeavouring to sketch.

—A . P. SINNETT

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## THE VESSEL AND THE ESSENCE

The two—Theosophy and the Theosophical Society—as a vessel and the *olla podrida* it contains, must not be confounded. One is, as an ideal, *divine* Wisdom, perfection itself; the other a poor, imperfect thing, trying to run *under,* if not *within,* its shadow on Earth. No man is perfect; why, then, should any member of the T.S. be expected to be a paragon of every human virtue? And why should the whole organization be criticized and blamed for the faults, whether real or imaginary, of some of the "Fellows," or even its Leaders. Never was the Society, as a concrete body, free from blame or sin—*errare humanum est*—nor were any of its members. Hence, it is rather those members—most of whom will not be led by theosophy, that ought to be blamed. Theosophy is the soul of its Society; the latter the gross and imperfect body of the former. Hence, those modern Solomons who *will* sit in the judgment Seat and talk of that they know nothing about, are invited before they slander theosophy or any theosophist to first get acquainted with both, instead of ignorantly calling one a "farrago of insane beliefs" and the other a "sect of impostors and lunatics."

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

# "THE LONG VIEW"

AND now we have shown, it is hoped, what real Theosophy is, and what are its adherents. One is divine Science and a code of Ethics so sublime that no theosophist is capable of doing it justice; the others weak but sincere men. Why, then, should Theosophy ever be judged by the personal shortcomings of any leader or member of our 150 branches? One may work for it to the best of his ability, yet never raise himself to the height of his call and aspiration. This is his or her misfortune, never the fault of Theosophy, or even of the body at large. Its Founders claim no other merit than that of having set the first theosophical wheel rolling. If judged at all they must be judged by the work they have done, not by what friends may think or enemies say of them. There is no room for *personalities* in a work like ours; and all must be ready, as the Founders are, if needs be, for the car of Jaggennath to crush them *individually* for *the good of all.* It is only in the days of the dim Future, when death will have laid his cold hand on the luckless Founders and stopped thereby their activity, that their respective merits and demerits, their good and bad acts and deeds, and their theosophical work will have to be weighed in the Balance of Posterity. Then only, after the two scales with their contrasted loads have been brought to an equipoise, and the character of the net result left over has become evident to all in its full and intrinsic value, then only shall the nature of the verdict passed be determined with anything like justice. At present, except in India, those results are too scattered over the face of the earth, too much limited to a handful of individuals to be easily judged. Now, these results can hardly be perceived, much less heard of amid the din and clamour made by our teeming enemies, and their ready imitators—the indifferent. Yet however small, if once proved good, even now every man who has at heart the moral progress of humanity, owes his thankfulness to Theosophy for those results. And as Theosophy was revived and brought before the world, *via* its unworthy servants, the "Founders," if their work was useful, it alone must be their vindicator, regardless of the present state of their balance in the petty cash accounts of Karma, wherein social "respectabilities" are entered up.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

# NOTES ON THE DHAMMAPADA

THE psychological importance of Chapter Twenty-Two, entitled "The Downward Course," is given special attention in the Foreword to the recent Cunningham Press edition of *The Dhammapada.* It is there suggested that the last three cantos of this brief discourse show why so many modern psychotherapists appreciate Buddha above all "religious" teachers. A single passage—Canto Thirteen—will illustrate:

> They who discern evil where there is no evil (as well as) they who see nothing evil in what is evil—both enter the downward path, following false doctrines.

Here is represented the whole complex problem of "guilt feelings"—the effect of a foreshortened view of one's own ethical potential, measured against the distorted background of conventional morality. The essential theosophical criticism of "conventional morality," of course, is that codes of behavior which resemble the Ten Commandments emphasize punishment for deviation from established norms. Under the psychology of guilt, one not only feels that he *ought* to be punished if he crosses the borderline of an arbitrarily defined respectability, but, also, he may attempt to mitigate the disturbance of his own nature by punishing others; the emphasis is not upon "good," whether in ourselves or in others, but upon "evil" and its proscribed consequences. The writers of the Cunningham Foreword therefore point out that much of the work of psychotherapy has lain in readjusting those elements of ethical perception which have become unfortunately wedded to "guilt" feelings:

> Clinicians of our time are still encountering warped psyches influenced by distorted conceptions of sin; Buddha had his own backlog of priestly distortion to face, and his "point, counterpoint" method of instruction, in perfect balance itself, encouraged balance in those who listened. "Evil" is not to be feared, in other words, but *understood,* which can in turn only be accomplished by penetrating beyond traditional categories of Right and Wrong. Do we, today, really need anything more desperately than to find a way of retaining ethical awareness while rejecting categorical morality—and its accompanying self-righteousness?

Alan Watts, in his short volume on Zen Buddhism (*The Spirit of Zen,* John Murray, 1948), says that the Zen Masters simply echo an original Buddhist emphasis when they insist that "nobody could expect

to find enlightenment in a hermitage unless he was capable of finding it in the life of the world." Mr. Watts continues:

> For the first principle of the Mahayana is that all things, however vile on the surface and however insignificant, are aspects of the Buddha-nature, and this implies that every being and thing must be accepted; nothing can be excluded from the "Lotus Land of Purity" as being "worldly" or "trivial" or "base." As Thomas á Kempis wrote in the *Imitation of Christ,* "If thy heart were right, then every creature would be a mirror of life and a book of holy doctrine. There is no creature so small and abject, but it reflects the goodness of God."

In a later chapter, Mr. Watts carries the same thought further:

> Zen accepts and affirms the birth, growth, decay and death of men; there are no regrets for the past, and no fears for the future. Thus the Zen disciple gains all by accepting all, since ordinary possessiveness is loss—it is the denial of the right of people and things to live and change.
>
> While morality should not be confused with religion, it does take one a certain distance towards the goal; it cannot go the whole way because it is essentially rigid, intellectual and limiting, and Zen begins where morality leaves off. Morality is valuable so long as it is recognized as a means to an end; it is a good servant, but a terrible master. When men use it as a servant it enables them to adapt themselves to society, to mix easily with their fellows, and most especially it permits freedom for spiritual development. When it is their master, they become bigots and conventional ethical machines.

Mr. Watts concludes that those who have understood the ethics of the Buddha realize that the "tremendous power of the spirit" is released only when the externally imposed disciplines of an arbitrary code have been relinquished in favor of *self*-discipline.

A. H. Maslow's *Motivation and Personality* travels the same path in establishing a definition of the "emotionally mature" or "self-actualizing person." Professor Maslow recognizes, as did Buddha, that independent thinkers *do* feel something of shame or guilt at times—but they are not *defensively* guilty, and for the following reasons:

> What healthy people *do* feel guilty about (or ashamed, anxious, sad, or defensive) are (1) improvable shortcomings, e.g., laziness, thoughtlessness, loss of temper, hurting others; (2) stubborn remnants of psychological ill health, e.g., prejudice, jealousy, envy; (3) habits, which, though relatively independent of character structure, may yet be very strong, or (4) shortcomings of the species or of the culture of the group with which they have identified. The general

formula seems to be that healthy people will feel bad about discrepancies between what is and what might very well be or ought to be.

We come here to the distinction between ethics and morality. In Professor Maslow's words, "self-actualizing people have codes of ethics that are relatively autonomous and individual rather than conventional. The unthinking observer might sometimes believe them to be unethical, since they can break not only conventions but laws when the situation seems to demand it. But the very opposite is the case. They are the most ethical of people even though their ethics are not necessarily the same as those of the people around them. It is this kind of observation that leads us to understand very assuredly that the ordinary ethical behavior of the average person is largely conventional behavior rather than truly ethical behavior, e.g., behavior based on fundamentally accepted principles."

All of this Buddha knew, and thus tried to help his disciples safeguard themselves from unnatural shame, fear and evil. In his time, as at every time before and since, stylized religion has emphasized both the power of evil and the necessity for obtaining sacramental or extraterrestrial help in avoiding its influence. While the essential Hinduism of the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad-Gita* clearly expresses the Wisdom Religion, the Brahmin priests of Buddha's day were diligently advertising the necessity for their services as indispensable protectors —from what, self-knowledge? Well, there were demons and dark forces in plenty to be fought or propitiated, and the special talents of the priestly craft were thus presumably necessary. It is for this reason that Buddha emphasizes so strongly, and in so many ways, "the good things of life"—even though these must be granted to be, from the standpoint of the spiritual plane, evanescent. In the chapter following "The Downward Course," Buddha again enumerates the experiences which the disciple can never be prevented from enjoying:

Aforetime this mind of mine would wander as it liked, as it desired, as it pleased. Now I control it completely even as a rider controls with his hook a rutting elephant.

Rejoice in wakefulness. Guard well your thoughts. Draw yourself out of evil, like an elephant sunk in the mud.

Companions are pleasant in times of need. Enjoyment is pleasant when shared by others. Merit is pleasant in the hour of death. Giving up of all sorrow is pleasant.

> To have a mother in the world is happiness; to have a father in the world is happiness. To have a recluse in the world is happiness! to have a sage in the world is happiness.
>
> Virtue lasting in old age is happiness. Faith firmly rooted is happiness. Attainment of Wisdom is happiness. Avoidance of sins is happiness.

Verse Eight, in suggesting that the disciple must draw *himself* "out of evil, like an elephant sunk in the mud," implies in this homely way a conception of individual man as a being of great strength, who can overcome "evil," unaided. Nurtured and strengthened by the legitimate joys of earthly existence, he is the better able to attend to this task, to attain "self-possession." Moreover, whether or not one is blessed by worthy parents or companions, or by the presence in one's intimate circle of wise men, he is still strong enough in his own right to proceed alone if necessary. Man, in other words, is able to enjoy life *even in solitude*:

> If you do not find a prudent companion, upright and self-possessed, then walk alone like a king who has renounced his kingdom and his conquests. Be like a free elephant in the forest.
>
> It is better to live alone. There is no companionship with a fool. Let a man advance alone, committing no sin, like an elephant in the forest.

So Buddha has a great deal to say, albeit indirectly, on the subject of "guilt." Never discounting the spiritual strength of the determined aspirant, Buddha refers to the various temptations of "evil deeds" as simply varieties of ignorance—and, therefore, the true dynamic of progress resides within the man, and is never conceived as resident in a God whose extra-cosmic Goodness is the only hope for salvation. In Erich Fromm's words, Buddhism is a "humanistic religion," and Fromm's discussion of this point is both perceptive as to the essential nature of Buddha's teachings and an excellent summarization of one aspect of the Theosophical Movement. In *Psychoanalysis and Religion,* Dr. Fromm writes:

> Religious experience in this kind of religion is the experience of oneness with the All, based on one's relatedness to the world as it is grasped with thought and with love. Man's aim in humanistic religion is to achieve the greatest strength, not the greatest powerlessness; virtue is self-realization, not obedience. Faith is certainty of conviction based on one's experience of thought and feeling, not assent to propositions on credit of the proposer. The prevailing

mood is that of joy, while the prevailing mood in authoritarian religion is that of sorrow and of guilt.

Inasmuch as humanistic religions are theistic, God is a symbol of *man's own powers* which he tries to realize in his life, and is not a symbol of force and domination, having *power over man.*

Illustrations of humanistic religions are early Buddhism, Taoism, the teachings of Isaiah, Jesus, Socrates, Spinoza, certain trends in the Jewish and Christian religions (particularly mysticism), the religion of Reason of the French Revolution. It is evident from these that the distinction between authoritarian and humanistic religion cuts across the distinction between theistic and non-theistic, and between religions in the narrow sense of the word and philosophical systems of religious character. What matters in all such systems is not the thought system as such but the human attitude underlying their doctrines.

One of the best examples of humanistic religions is early Buddhism. The Buddha is a great teacher, he is the "awakened one" who recognizes the truth about human existence. He does not speak in the name of a supernatural power but in the name of reason. He calls upon every man to make use of his own reason and to see the truth which he was only the first to find. Once man takes the first step in seeing the truth, he must apply his efforts to live in such a way that he develops his powers of reason and of love for all human creatures. Only to the degree to which he succeeds in this can he free himself from the bondage of irrational passions. While man must recognize his limitations according to Buddhistic teaching, he must also become aware of the powers in himself. The concept of Nirvana as the state of mind the fully awakened one can achieve is not one of man's helplessness and submission but on the contrary one of the development of the highest powers man possesses.

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## THE GREATEST JOY

The happy man is the man who is neither divided against himself nor pitted against the world. Such a man feels himself a citizen of the universe, enjoying freely the spectacle that it offers and the joys that it affords, untroubled by the thought of death because he feels himself not really separate from those who will come after him. It is in such profound instinctive union with the stream of life that the greatest joy is to be found.

—BERTRAND RUSSELL

# SEEDS AND SEEDLINGS

## The Universal Trinity

[The short articles comprising this series are derivations from characteristic platform talks given during the years 1915-35. As often as was practicable, the words of the speaker have been used—hoping thus to convey some of the force originally imparted to the ideas.]

ONE of the greatest difficulties in the early study of Theosophy is to see clearly that unfamiliar words often connote familiar concepts, and that ordinary words may denote unusual meanings. This makes for mental confusion, so that part of the preliminary study of Theosophy consists in a careful defining of terms.

Take, for example, *form.* In nontechnical usage, form and shape are interchangeable; and so accustomed are we to this connotation that it is difficult to dissociate the two. How can we make the idea of "thought-forms" or "spiritual forms" *mean* anything to us in terms of shape? What, for instance, is the "shape" of a thought? the shape of a feeling? the shape of a choice?

So we see that *form* as used in Theosophy does not connote shape, the external appearance, but rather denotes the essence of form, or limitation. It makes no difference whether the limitations are self-imposed or imposed from without; it makes no difference how large or small the form, how simple or complex. Form of *any* kind means limitation; and the forms may be physical or mental or spiritual. On the other hand, form also implies substance; and we shall discover that whereas we *can* think of form without shape, we cannot think of form without substance of some sort. A metaphysical form, then, must be of metaphysical substance.

Another familiar word encountered in Theosophy is "principle," but it is here a "term" that does not *necessarily* mean any of the ideas we ordinarily associate with it. Theosophically speaking, a principle is the *basis* by virtue of which alone any particular form is possible. A principle is a universal form, more often called a "state" or "condition." It follows, then, that every form of every kind—spiritual, intellectual, or physical—originated in a principle of formation. In Theosophical teaching, this principle of formation is what is meant by the word "matter," or, as the Hindus say, *Prakriti.*

Now a mind is a metaphysical form made up of metaphysical matter. In other words, the principle of formation called "matter" applies

metaphysically just as well as physically. Behind every mind is the principle from which all minds are derived. In Theosophy, this principle is called Intelligence, *Mahat,* Universal Ideation, or simply Mind in the abstract. So *Mind* means the principle of perception.

We have now two great classes of forms derived from a principle of formation and from a principle of perception. We have to go on, however, to another definition: of *Beings.* Behind any and every "being" there is a *principle of Being* called Spirit or the Monad. Therefore we can reduce all physical forms to their source in matter—the principle of formation; all intelligences to their source—the principle of Being, named Spirit.

That which limits Intelligence in the lowest forms (what we call the "elements") is the narrowness of their range of perception. The *power* of formation and the power of choice are there, but both are rigidly restricted by the narrowness of perception. As the range of perception increases, beings mount the evolutionary ladder. That is, they are embodied in increasingly complex forms and exhibit a wider range of choice, until the body of man is the most complex form in this universe. There is not a form (remember our definition of form) in the elemental, mineral, vegetable, or animal kingdoms that is not found also in the body of man. *In the body of a single man is every form of existence in this whole universe.* Yet how varied is the range of perception and choice in men! A Mahatma's power of perception and choice covers the entire manifested universe. That is, his power of action or expression comprehends his control of any form—spiritual, intellectual, or physical. A Mahatma is the highest embodiment.

We have now reduced the universe to a universal trinity: the principle of formation, the principle of perception, and the principle of choice. These principles are nothing in the world but the three periodical forms or manifestations of one and the same eternal life. The interactions and interrelations of these three universal principles *when regarded as the operation of the One Life* are called "Karma." It now becomes possible to see the trinity behind all evolution, yet to see that this trinity is not three separate realities, but three phases or aspects of the One Life. To see Karma thus, as the *process* of interaction and interrelation of the universal trinity, helps us also to realize its complete impersonality.

# OF THE MYSTIC

He who knows his soul (inner self) daily retires to the region of *Swarga* (the heavenly realm) in his own heart. —*Brihad-Aranyaka*

THE power of the mystic to perceive beyond the appearance presented to the five senses and the mind, to discern between illusion and reality, becomes natural to man in the degree and to the extent that he distinguishes and realizes within himself that which eternally persists without change, amidst incessant change—a nameless Center within a circumference at once boundless and manifold.

Perhaps the primary need of the mystically-inclined is to learn concentration, to learn the nature of "Dharana"—the intense and perfect concentration of the mind upon some one interior object, accompanied by complete abstraction from everything pertaining to the external Universe, or the world of the senses. Its practical and natural concommitant is the ability to be contemplative *while engaged in action* in the normal course of everyday life. One must "isolate" in the sense indicated by Patanjali.

Or, to phrase the "primary need" in another fashion, the power of the mystic to hold a detached point of view, to maintain an outlook free of preconceptions, to exercise judgment clear and independent of external influences, sustained by certitude, implies a sense of equilibrium. It is the spontaneous florescence of a fixed attitude resting on the recognition that "rigid justice rules the world"; hence, the true mystic is unsolicitous about the event of things. Or, one might say that the pre-eminent need of the potential mystic is control. In its original sense, *control* meant to check one thing against another—to keep within the bounds of what is correct, essential, proper (true, necessary, right). Unchecked thoughts and desires, careless speech, is so much unregulated energy falling into a pattern, which grows, and may prove a nemesis. There is no line of demarcation between tendency and habit. And habit's force may work destruction while yet the body lives on. Hearken to the warning of Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*:

> He who attendeth to the inclinations of the senses, in them hath a concern; from this concern is created passion, from passion anger. from anger is produced delusion, from delusion a loss of the memory, from the loss of memory loss of discrimination, and from loss of discrimination loss of all!

On the other hand, the habit-pattern resulting from a discipline undertaken—*self-induced and self-devised*—with an ideal end in view, with checks and balances and the working out of Karma, helps make possible the "ideal of progress"—a perfected vehicle—as "harmony within" is attained. To check, conserve, direct and re-direct the energies within the field of action constitutes the contest of life: a challenge from below, an opportunity from above.

The highest conceivable power—the true mystic's goal—is to *become* a Being of Compassion, an embodiment of the Law of Brotherhood. Says the *Voice of the Silence*:

> COMPASSION is no attribute. It is the Law of LAWS—eternal Harmony, Alaya's SELF; a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting Right, and fitness of all things, the law of Love eternal.
>
> The more thou dost become at one with it, thy being melted in its BEING, the more thy Soul unites with that which Is, the more thou wilt become COMPASSION ABSOLUTE.
>
> Such is the . . . Path of the Buddhas of perfection.

There is again no sharp line of demarcation in the upward-tending way. Just as the animal-man is the human-man, when he acts humanely, so is the human-man the divine-man when Compassion lights the heart, for then rapport exists, and distinctions lose their divisiveness. Caste, creed, color, race, time, place and circumstance are conditionings henceforth—barriers no longer. The ever-present need of the true mystic finds expression in the words of Walt Whitman:

> We walk silent among disputes and assertions, but reject
> not the disputers nor anything that is asserted,
> We hear the bawling and din, we are reached at by
> divisions, jealousies, recriminations on every side,
> They close peremptorily upon us to surround us, my
> comrade,
> Yet we walk upheld, free, the whole earth over, journeying up and down till we make our ineffaceable mark
> upon time and the diverse eras,
> Till we saturate time and eras, that the men and women
> of races, ages to come, may prove brethren and
> lovers as we are.

*The Voice of the Silence* points the way in language that only the mystic comprehends; and that, by degrees, for he is himself the Way.

Consider the form and content of this last of H.P.B.'s books,—*The Voice of the Silence* with its companion Fragments. These truly notable

Fragments are treatises from the *Book of the Golden Precepts,* selected for the "few real mystics" in the Theosophical Society, and "sure to answer their needs."

The *Golden Precepts* are inexorable commands; they contain the essence of human wisdom; they are the foundation of happiness. Bethink you, how gains the mystic happiness?

Anciently it was told that Consciousness is Being, and among those who knew, it was in this wise considered:

| | |
|---|---|
| *Sat,* or Being;<br>*Chit,* or Consciousness, Mind;<br>*Ananda,* or Bliss. | These together are called *Satchitananda* |

Such was the division made. But *Sat*—or Being—the first of the three, is itself both *Chit* and *Ananda.* The appearing together in full harmony of Being and Consciousness is Bliss or *Ananda.* Hence that harmony is called *Satchitananda.* In this instruction is seen a need of the mystic: to attain that harmony within himself.

Harmony is a balancing of forces. INTELLIGENCES having reached an appropriate equilibrium between matter and spirit are called "human Beings." And in natural growth of Beings, each stage has a balance-point. The *Voice* says: Thy Soul cannot be hurt but through thy erring body; control and master both, and thou art safe when crossing to the nearing "Gate of Balance."

The *need* of control is pre-eminent. He needs must stand alone, and yet not separate.

> If through the Hall of Wisdom thou would'st reach the Vale of Bliss, Disciple, close fast thy senses against the great dire heresy of Separateness that weans thee from the rest.
>
> Before thou canst approach the foremost gate thou hast to learn to live in the eternal. Thou hast to live and breathe in all, as all that thou perceivest breathes in thee; to feel thyself abiding in all things, all things in SELF.

As final function, Beings of Compassion *shield* mankind:

> Self-doomed to live through future Kalpas, unthanked and unperceived by men; wedged as a stone with countless other stones which form the "Guardian Wall," such is thy future if the seventh Gate thou passest. Built by the hands of many Masters of Compassion, raised by their tortures, by their blood cemented, it shields mankind, since man is man, protecting it from further and far greater misery and sorrow.

# YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK—AND ANSWER

*IN theosophical study one discovers that man is of a dual nature, the one being godlike, the other capable of selfish and self-centered thoughts and tendencies. The very young child is not involved with moral acts or thoughts, yet still is incarnated in the dual nature and is attracted by selfish thoughts. A young child should be made aware of the nature of such thoughts, yet is it not injurious to a child's development into a mature being to be told he is selfish at the age, that is, when a child cannot help but identify himself with the thought that he, essentially, must be a selfish being—hence, "bad" by nature? This very often results in guilt feelings which engulf the child, and "which lead in ways unmarked, from guilt to punishment." How should one introduce this explanation of human nature to a small child, whether one be a parent or teacher?*

(*a*) First, let us decide on what we probably mean by "selfish" thoughts or acts. The dictionary supplies this definition: Caring unduly or supremely for oneself; regarding one's own comfort, advantage, etc., in disregard, or at the expense, of that of others. That is, one is selfish when he is motivated to gratify his own inclinations without encompassing in his thinking as broad a perspective as he is capable of seeing. The results can directly involve other human beings, or they can involve just himself and his own nature and his general relation to life. Therefore, something that is selfish starts with the individual's thinking, motive, evaluations, rather than with the act itself. Thus, as the question implies, one has the power of choice between one course and as many other courses as he can see. And he is represented by these good or selfish-appearing acts only to the degree in which he involves himself in terms of *conscious* motivation.

Now, a small child is not yet fully incarnated—that is, he does not have at his disposal all the tools with which to evaluate, reason, sense, feel, or even desire. He is, therefore, bound to wander around from one pull of interest to another, trying them out, not knowing, or even wishing very much to know, which is right and which is wrong. Yet every child "feels" some pricking of conscience when he does something that causes others, children or adults, unhappiness. It is partly because he senses that it is not in accord with the best to exclude the

concerns of others from his private world. This is not yet on the reasoning level, but a matter of feelings. Therefore, the adult is concerned with trying to draw the child, carefully, into the arena of reasoning—helping him put himself in the position of others, which involves conscious direction of the mind.

It is rather obvious today, with the help of child psychologists, that it is un-educative to pounce on a child by telling him that he is "wrong," "bad," or "selfish." *He* is not rightly characterized as any of these; his way of thinking has just not included enough. If one starts out with the attitude of finding out where the child himself is, what he is thinking of, what it is he wants, and *why,* then one can explain what he, the adult, thinks—or what others think or feel or want. The child should not be encouraged to completely identify himself with others or their way of thinking, but he should be introduced to *awareness* of others' thoughts. Gradually he learns that he is *much* like everyone else, though differing in degree and in specific tendencies which influence choices.

Perhaps if something done by a child is what an adult would call selfish, rather than use this term, which leads the child to feel that he is really "bad" *inside of himself,* one might call an act "hurtful." Almost all children have experienced hurting or being hurt physically, have mistreated a cat or some other animal, and have felt pangs of regret. They can see from the physical standpoint, which is where they are much of the time, what this means. Therefore, if such a word is used to characterize some of their acts, they are not being introduced to something completely new. They are merely asked to expand on their first tangible realization that "hurt" can be caused or received. And then, too, this sort of approach leaves them much room to think, and wonder further on what really makes for happiness, which is to them enjoyable and desirable.

It is the adults' obligation to any child to lead him into life with the feeling that all things in the universe—good, bad, beautiful, ugly—capacities for happiness, sorrow, soul-searching or complacency, are in him, but that he can choose which one he wishes to entertain, develop, encourage. No matter what comes to him in the way of realizing his own weaknesses and confusion, he needs to be able to have faith in his own essential nature.

(*b*) One of the values of theosophical philosophy and doctrine is its emphasis on man as a manifold being who cannot be labeled or

categorized except in the most general sense. In one respect, this assumption appears to be implicit in the early part of the question, where the statement is made that man is "capable of selfish and self-centered thoughts." To be "capable" of an evil act implies that the actor is not essentially and inherently evil—a distinction which sets Madame Blavatsky's teachings worlds apart from the theological doctrine of the essential evilness of man's nature. Also, a recognition that a child's acts do not fall neatly into one category or another would probably go a long way toward reducing the frustrations of tomorrow's adults.

Any assumption of the child's identity with his selfish thoughts is ill-founded. The theosophical teaching of the lighting up of *Manas* has its social counterpart in the implicit obligation to work for an expanded "self," always able to improve modes of interaction with those around him. Both *Manasic* awareness and the social self are incompletely formed in the young child, and only through the process of living with others are they drawn out. Hence to accuse a child of being essentially selfish, or even to suppose that the "self" is fully aware and *able* to identify with an act of motivation, seems to be doing the child a great injustice. A good deal of what passes for selfish action may be mentally unmotivated or thoughtless; the potentially controlling mind is not sufficiently present to be held to account.

It would be just as pointless, however, to argue that at no time in the child's early life can he distinguish right from wrong, or harmful behavior from helpful. Whenever such infringement of justice to others arises, the child should be made to understand, as nearly as possible in his own terms, the distinction. It should not be too hard to find within the child's own experience, examples of co-operative effort and consideration for others which demonstrate that justice requires a regard for others. Through the effort to act justly, *Manas* continues to brighten; the educative "investment" earns interest and reaps added returns in the future. Thus, by generalizing on a particular action as much as the child's development will allow, and at the same time avoiding the sweeping generalizations in regard to his *nature*—generalizations which may leave deep-seated wounds—the child grows with each succeeding experience, and demonstrates more of the qualities which his parents hope and expect to find in him.

# OUR EARTH'S RACES

The truths of today are the falsehoods and errors of yesterday, and vice versa. —*The Secret Doctrine*

THE human races have been born one from the other, grow, develop, become old, and die. Their sub-races and nations follow the same rule. We have spoken of seven races, five of which have nearly completed their earthly career, and have claimed that every root-race, with its sub-races and innumerable family divisions and tribes, was entirely distinct from its preceding and succeeding race. This will be objected to, on the authority of uniform experience in the question of Anthropology and Ethnology. While Materialists deny everything in the universe, save matter, Archaeologists are trying to dwarf antiquity, and seek to destroy every claim to ancient Wisdom by tampering with Chronology. Our present-day orientalists and historical writers are to ancient History that which the white ants are to the buildings in India. More dangerous even than those termites, the modern archaeologists—the "authorities" of the future in the matter of Universal History—are preparing for the history of past nations the fate of certain edifices in tropical countries: "History will tumble down and break into atoms in the lap of the twentieth century, devoured to its foundations by her annalists," said Michelet.

Very soon, indeed, under their combined efforts, it will share the fate of those ruined cities in both Americas, which lie deeply buried under impassable virgin forests. Historical facts will remain as concealed from view by the inextricable jungle of modern hypotheses, denials and scepticism. But very happily *actual* History repeats herself, for she proceeds, like everything else, in cycles; and dead facts and events deliberately drowned in the sea of modern scepticism will ascend once more and reappear on the surface. Once more we address only those who, doubting the general derivation of myths from "the contemplation of the visible workings of external nature" . . . think it less hard to believe that these wonderful stories of gods and demigods, of giants and dwarfs, of dragons and monsters of all descriptions are transformations, than to believe them to be inventions. It is only such "transformations" in physical nature, as much as in the memory and conceptions of our present mankind, that the Secret Doctrine teaches. It confronts the purely speculative hypotheses of modern Science, based upon the experience of barely a few centuries, with the

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NOTE.—Collated from the writings of H. P. Blavatsky.

unbroken tradition and records of its Sanctuaries. And brushing away that tissue of cobweb-like theories, spun in the darkness that covers a period of hardly a few millenniums back, and which Europeans call their "History," the Old Science says to us: Listen, now, to my version of the memoirs of Humanity.

*The Secret Doctrine* teaches that the Aryan nations of the present are in their fifth root-race. Hence the Aryan nations could trace their descent through the Atlanteans, who constituted the fourth root-race, from the more spiritual races of the Lemurians who preceded the Atlanteans, and in whom the "Sons of Wisdom" had personally incarnated. It is taught that with the advent of the divine Dynasties, . . . referred to, the first civilizations were started. Under the guidance of their *divine* Rulers, the third-race built large cities, cultivated arts and sciences, and knew astronomy, architecture and mathematics to perfection. Such divine Dynasties among men were claimed by the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Greeks, etc., as being those which preceded their *human* kings; they are still believed in by the modern Hindus, and are enumerated in their sacred books.

The primeval civilization, that of the Lemurians, did not, as one may think, immediately follow their physiological transformation (i.e., that of the separation of the sexes from the hermaphroditic condition which preceded). Between the final evolution and the first city built by the third-race Humanity, many hundred thousands of years had passed. We find the Lemurians in their sixth sub-race building their first rock-cities, out of stone and lava. One of such great cities of primitive structure was built entirely of lava, some thirty miles west from where Easter Island now stretches its narrow piece of sterile ground, and was entirely destroyed by a series of volcanic eruptions. The oldest remains of Cyclopean buildings were all the handiwork of the Lemurians of the last sub-races; and an occultist shows, therefore, no wonder on learning that the stone relics found on the small piece of land called Easter Island by Captain Cook, are "very much like the walls of the Temple of Pachacamac or the Ruins of Tia-Huanuco in Peru," and that they are in the CYCLOPEAN STYLE. The first large cities appeared on that region of the continent which is now the island of Madagascar. It is further asserted that there were civilized people and savages in those days as there are now.

It is this latter fact which would account for the great difference and variation between the intellectual capacities of races, nations, and indi-

vidual men today. Evolution achieved its work of perfection with the former, the "civilized"; and Karma—its work of destruction with the latter, the "savage." While incarnating, and in other cases only informing the human vehicles evolved by the *first* brainless (*manasless*) race, the incarnating Powers and Principles had to make their choice between, and take into account, the past Karmas of the *Monads*—between which and their bodies they had to become the connecting link. The aboriginal Australians still with us today, and their like, are the descendants of those who, instead of vivifying the spark dropped into them by the "Flames," extinguished it by long generations of bestiality.

And while, in some regions of the Earth during the period of the third root-race, a portion of mankind preferred leading a nomadic and patriarchal life, and in others savage man was hardly learning to build a fire to protect himself against the Elements, his brothers—more favoured than he by their *Karma,* and helped by the divine intelligence which informed them—built cities, and cultivated arts and sciences. Nevertheless, and civilization notwithstanding, while their pastoral brethren enjoyed wondrous powers as their birthright, the builders, could now obtain theirs only gradually; even these being generally used for power over physical nature and selfish and unholy purposes. *Civilization* has ever developed the physical and the intellectual at the cost of the psychic and spiritual. The command and the guidance over his own psychic nature, which foolish men now associate with the supernatural, were with early Humanity innate and congenital, and came to man as naturally as walking and thinking. These have become "secrets" only in our race, and were public property in the third.

Gradually, mankind went down in stature, for even before the real advent of the fourth or Atlantean race, the majority of mankind had fallen into iniquity and sin, save their hierarchy of the "Elect," the followers and disciples of the "Sons of Will and Yoga" called later the "Sons of the Fire Mist." Then came the Atlanteans; the giants whose physical beauty and strength reached their climax, in accordance with evolutionary law, toward the middle period of their fourth sub-race.

Lemuria is said to have perished about 700,000 years before the commencement of what is now called the Tertiary Age (the Eocene). H. P. Blavatsky quotes the author of *"Historie des Vierges: Les Peuples et les Continents Disparus,"* who says:—"One of the most ancient

legends of India, preserved in the temples by oral and written tradition, relates that several hundred thousand years ago there existed in the Pacific Ocean an immense continent which was destroyed by geological upheaval, and the fragments of which must be sought in Madagascar, Sumatra, Java, Borneo and the principal isles of Polynesia. The high plateaux of Hindustan and Asia, according to this hypothesis, would only have been represented in those distant epochs by great islands contiguous to the central continent. . . ." And further, "that a religious belief, common to Malacca and Polynesia, that is to say, to the two opposite extremes of the Oceanic world, affirms 'that all these islands once formed two immense countries, inhabited by yellow men and black men, always at war; and that the gods, wearied with their quarrels, having charged Ocean to pacify them, the latter swallowed up the two continents, and since, it has been impossible to make him give up his captives. Alone, the mountain-peaks and high plateaux escaped the flood, by the power of the gods, who perceived too late the mistake they had committed.' . . . The three summits of this continent, the Sandwich Islands, New Zealand, Easter Island, are distant from each other from fifteen to eighteen hundred leagues, and the groups of intermediate islands . . . are themselves distant from these extreme points from seven or eight hundred to one thousand leagues. . . . And yet each of these people maintained that their island had at one time formed part of an immense stretch of land which extended toward the West on the side of Asia. All, brought together, were found to speak the same language, to have the same usages, the same customs, the same religious belief. And all to the question, 'Where is the cradle of your race?' for sole response, extended their hand toward the setting sun."

It is asked by some Theosophists: "What will *Atlantis* be like when raised?" Here, there is a slight misconception. Were the *same* identical lands of Atlantis that were submerged to be raised again, then they would indeed be *barren for ages.* Because the Atlantic sea-bottom is covered with some 5,000 feet of chalk at present, and more is forming; this is no reason why, however, when the time for a new continent to appear arrives, a geological convulsion and upraising of the sea bottom should not dispose of these 5,000 feet of chalk, for the formation of some mountains—and 5,000 more come to the surface. The racial cataclysms are not a Noah's deluge of forty days—a kind of Bombay

monsoon. The periodical sinking and reappearance of the mighty continents, now called Atlantis and Lemuria by the modern writers, is no fiction. Our globe is subject to seven periodical *entire* changes which go *pari passu* with the races. During this Round, *The Secret Doctrine* asserts, there must be seven terrestrial *pralayas,* three occasioned by the change in the inclination of the earth's axis. It is a *law* which acts at its appointed time, and not at all blindly as science may think; but in strict accordance and harmony with *Karmic* law. In Occultism this law is referred to as "the great ADJUSTER." The cataclysm which destroyed the huge (Lemurian) continent of which Australia is the largest relic, was due to a series of subterranean convulsions and the breaking asunder of the ocean floors. That which put an end to its successor—the fourth continent—was brought on by successive disturbances in the axial rotation. The latter changed the face of the globe, and no memory of its flourishing continents and isles, of its civilizations and sciences remains in the annals of history, save in the sacred records of the East. Nor have we many details about the submersion of the continent inhabited by the second root-race, called the "Hyperborean."

But the term "Atlantean" must not mislead the reader to regard these as one race only, or even a nation. It is as though one said "Asiatics." Many, multiplied, and various were the Atlanteans, who represented several *humanities,* and almost a countless number of races and nations—more varied indeed than would be the "Europeans" were this name to be given indiscriminately to the five existing parts of the world. There were brown, red, yellow, white and black Atlanteans; giants and dwarfs (as some African tribes comparatively are, even now). In the Eocene age, even in its very first part, the great cycle of the fourth race men, the (Lemuro) Atlantean had already reached its highest point of civilization, and the great continent, the father of nearly all the present continents, showed the first symptoms of sinking. Atlantis as a whole perished during the Miocene period.

Ælian preserved an extract from Theophrastus written during the days of Alexander the Great. It is a dialogue between Midas, the Phrygian, and Silenus. The former is told of a continent that had existed in times of old, so immense, that Asia, Europe and Africa seemed like poor islands compared with it. It was the last to produce animals and plants of gigantic magnitudes. There, said Silenus, men grew to double

the size of the tallest man in his (the narrator's) time, and they lived to twice as old an age. They had wealthy cities with temples, and one of such (cities) held more than a million inhabitants in it, gold and silver being found there in great abundance. Records came to the fifth race Aryans from their predecessors of the fourth, which had been piously preserved and which told them how their parent root-race, becoming with every generation more arrogant, owing to the acquisition of super-human powers, had been gradually gliding toward its end. Those records reminded them of the giant intellect of the preceding races as well as of their giant size. One finds the repetition of those records in every age of history, in almost every old fragment which has descended to us from antiquity. As to the question of the four distinct races of mankind which preceded our fifth race, there is nothing mystical in it, except the ethereal bodies of the first races; and it is a matter of legendary, nevertheless, very correct history. That legend is universal. If the Western savant pleases to see in it only a myth, it does not make the slightest difference. The Mexicans had, and still have, the tradition of the fourfold destruction of the world by fire and water, just as the Egyptians had, and the Hindus have, to this day.

To show how continents, races, nations and cycles overlap each other, one has but to think of Lemuria, the last of whose lands perished about 700,000 years before the beginning of the Tertiary period, and the last of "Atlantis" only a few thousand years ago; thus both overlapping—one the Atlantean period, and the other the Aryan. Since the beginning of the Atlantean race many millions of years have passed, yet we find the last of the Atlanteans, still mixed up with the Aryan element, 11,000 years ago. While this takes place, in this immense period, the elder race loses its characteristics and external type and assumes the new features of the younger race. This is proved by all the formations of mixed human races. Now, Occult philosophy teaches that even now, under our very eyes, the new Race and Races are preparing to be formed, and that it is in America that the transformation will take place, and has already silently commenced.

Thus the Americans have become in only three centuries a "primary race" *pro tem,* before becoming a race apart, and strongly separated from all other now existing races. They are, in short, the germs of the *Sixth* sub-race (of the Aryan race), and in some few hundred years more, will become most decidedly the pioneers of that race which must

succeed to the present European or fifth sub-race, in all its new characteristics. After this, in about 25,000 years, they will launch into preparations for the seventh sub-race; until in consequence of cataclysms—the first series of those which must one day destroy Europe, and still later the whole Aryan race (and thus affect both Americas), as most of the lands directly connected with the confines of our continent and isles—the Sixth *Root-Race* will have appeared on the stage of our Round.

When shall this be? Who knows save the great Masters of Wisdom, perchance, and they are as silent upon the subject as the snow-capped peaks that tower above them. All we know is, that it will silently come into existence; so silently, indeed, that for long millenniums shall its pioneers—the peculiar children who will grow into peculiar men and women—be regarded as anomalous *lusus naturae,* abnormalities physically and mentally. Then, as they increase and their numbers become with every age greater, one day they will awake to find themselves in a majority. It is the present men who will then begin to be regarded as exceptional mongrels, until these die out in their turn in civilized lands; surviving only in small groups on islands—the mountain peaks of today—where they will vegetate, degenerate, and finally die out, perhaps millions of years hence, as the Aztecs have, as the Nyam-Nyam and the dwarfish Moola Koorumba of the Nilghiri Hills are dying.

All these are the remnants of once mighty races, the recollection of whose existence has entirely died out of the remembrance of the modern generations, just as we shall vanish from the memory of the Sixth Race Humanity. The fifth will overlap the sixth race for many hundreds of millenniums, changing with it slower than its new successor, still changing in stature, general physique, and mentality, just as the fourth overlapped our Aryan race, and the third had overlapped the Atlanteans.

This process of preparation for the sixth great race must last throughout the whole sixth and seventh sub-races. But the *last* remnants of the Fifth Continent will not disappear until some time after the birth of the *new* Race; when another and *new* dwelling, the sixth continent, will have appeared above the *new* waters on the face of the globe, so as to receive the new stranger. To it will emigrate and settle all those who shall be fortunate enough to escape the general disaster. When this shall be—as just said—it is not for the writer to know. Only, as

nature no more proceeds by sudden jumps and starts, than man changes suddenly from a child into a mature man, the final cataclysm will be preceded by many smaller submersions and destructions both by wave and volcanic fires. The exultant pulse will beat high in the heart of the race now in the American zone, but there will be no more Americans when the Sixth race commences; no more, in fact, than Europeans; for they will now have become *a new race, and many new nations.*

Yet the Fifth will not die, but survive for a while: overlapping the new Race for many hundred thousand years to come, it will be transformed with it—slower than its new successor—still getting entirely altered in mentality, general physique, and stature. Mankind will not grow again into giant bodies as in the case of the Lemurians and the Atlanteans; because while the evolution of the fourth race led the latter down to the very bottom of materiality in its physical development, the present race is on its ascending arc; and the Sixth will be rapidly growing out of its bonds of matter, and even of flesh. Thus it is the mankind of the New world—one by far the senior of our Old one, a fact men had also forgotten, whose mission and Karma it is to sow the seeds for a forthcoming, grander, and far more glorious Race than any of those we know of at present. On the law of parallel history and races, the majority of the future mankind will be composed of glorious Adepts.

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## THE GIVING OF GIFTS

We have no pleasure in thinking of a benevolence that is only measured by its works. Love is inexhaustible, and if its estate is wasted, its granary emptied, still cheers and enriches, and the man, though he sleep, seems to purify the air and his house to adorn the landscape and strengthen the laws. We know who is benevolent, by quite other means than the amount of subscription to soup-societies. It is only low merits than can be enumerated. Fear, when your friends say to you what you have done well, and say it through; but when they stand with uncertain timid looks of respect and half-dislike, and must suspend their judgment for years to come, you may begin to hope. Those who live to the future must always appear selfish to those who live to the present.

—EMERSON

# ON THE LOOKOUT

## Explorative Thoughts Among Scientists

An editorial in *Life* (Jan. 28) asserts that many scientists "are beginning to worry about their relationship to society"; that there is "sober talk of scientists abandoning their traditional 'impartiality' toward the effects of their discoveries and of providing professional guidance to society on how to control the revolutionary potentials science is creating."

The editorial notes that in the last decade "known" space has been enlarged fifty times by photographs (from Palomar) which have revealed "millions upon millions of galaxies—each containing hundreds of billions of stars like our sun—never before seen." *Life* continues:

> One recent experiment, subjecting methane, ammonia, water and hydrogen to artificial lightning produced four amino acids essential to creating protein and therefore to life, reviving the ancient argument for the "spontaneous generation" of life. And since everything in this cosmos, living or dead, appears to be composed of the same basic stuff of hydrogen ions, some scientists are arguing the logical likelihood of life of some sort on other planets, perhaps even on millions of planets.

## A Hope to be Fulfilled?

H. P. Blavatsky expressed the hope (*S.D.* 1, 634) "that some students and theosophists, at least, will feel that there may be indeed a close relation between materialistic Science and Occultism, which is the complement and missing soul of the former." Now, it seems, the very limitations of materialistic science *may* lead some scientists in that direction. *Life* observes:

> The swifter scientific knowledge expands, the vaster are the areas of ignorance that seem to open. The powerful new atom smashers have been knocking out of the atom new particles (known as "strange" particles) whose existence no theory had predicted and whose action seemed inexplicable, presenting what Robert Oppenheimer calls "vast jumbles of new numbers, all with an insulting lack of obvious meaning."
>
> It may be that science is on the threshold of a major breakthrough to a new unifying theory, like that of Copernicus in his day, Newton in his, or Einstein in our own. But each time such a theory comes along, subsequent exceptions (like the "strange" particles) prove

its limitations. Moreover, as Oppenheimer has also remarked, such concepts as "thought" and "will" are likely to remain as far as ever beyond the reach of physio-chemical description. The more science progresses, the less does it promise us a theory of the ultimate nature of the universe, still less of the meaning of life.

## FROM PHYSICS TO METAPHYSICS

"It is impossible," says H.P.B. (*S.D.* I, 44-5), "to conceive anything without a cause; the attempt to do so makes the mind a blank. This is virtually the condition to which the mind must come at last when we try to trace back the chain of causes and effects, but both science and religion jump to this condition of blankness much more quickly than is necessary; for they ignore the metaphysical abstractions which are the only conceivable cause of physical concretions. These abstractions become more and more concrete as they approach our plane of existence, until finally they phenomenalise in the form of the material Universe, by a process of conversion of metaphysics into physics. . . ." Scientists, tracing effect back to cause, begin to discover the truth of that statement. *Life* infers:

> From the present chaos of science's conceptional universe two facts about it strike the layman as significant. One is that old-fashioned materialism is now even more old-fashioned. Its basic assumption—that the only "reality" is that which occupies space and has mass—is irrelevant to an age which has proved that matter is interchangeable with energy.
>
> Second conclusion is that old-fashioned metaphysics, so far from being irrelevant to an age of science, is science's indispensable complement for a full view of life. Physicists acknowledge as much; a current Martian advertisement says their rocket men's shop talk includes "the physics (and metaphysics)" of their work. Metaphysical speculation is becoming fashionable again. Set free of materialism, metaphysics could well become man's chief preoccupation of the next century and may even yield worldwide working consensus on the nature of life and the universe. This metaphysical quest must of course be compatible with the latest proven truths of science, and it is one in which scientists can be useful—but it is not confined to them. It is also a quest for philosophers and laymen and all who feel the challenge of eternal mystery.

## SPECULATION A LAYMAN'S RIGHT

Yet the scientist should reach very carefully beyond his proved facts for other "facts" which he *senses* must be there, and when he grasps

what he believes to be a new fact, it, in turn, must be proved. For, says H.P.B.: "The business of the man of exact Science is to observe, each in his chosen department, the phenomena of nature; to record, tabulate, compare and classify the facts, down to the smallest minutiæ which *are presented to the observation of the senses with the help of all the exquisite mechanism that modern invention supplies, not by the aid of metaphysical flights of fancy*. . . . Any sideway path from this royal road becomes *speculation*." (*S.D.* II, 663-4.)

Speculation, as such, is the supreme right of the philosopher—and of the layman. *Life* comments:

> One layman currently exercising his right to speculate is the critic and nature essayist Joseph Wood Krutch. In his reflective new book *The Great Chain of Life* Krutch observes, "If it really is true that man is merely the inevitable culmination of an improbable chemical reaction . . . then the fact that he has been able . . . to trace himself back to it is remarkable . . . that chemicals which are 'merely material' should come to understand their own nature is a staggering supposition. It is also a preposterous one." Man is now as free as before to suppose that, inside the whirling cosmos of the invisible atom as in the massive spirals of the countless nebulae in endless space, there is an Order and Purpose as was believed of old—only incredibly vaster.

## A Permissible Repetition

It seems pertinent here to repeat Dr. Krutch's observations regarding modern physics, as quoted from a recent lecture in *Manas,* Feb. 6:

> There has been a revolution in physics which many sober physicists recognize as perhaps greater even than the seventeenth century revolution of Galileo and Newton. In biology and in medicine, a revolution which may well be equally momentous is also taking place. Many, perhaps most, biologists now reject the mechanical implications of Darwinian evolution. Doctors now talk about psychosomatic medicine which recognized that not only does the body influence the mind but that the mind influences the body.
>
> What the physicist now accepts concerning the paradoxical nature of physical reality, about the relation of matter to energy, about the things he simply cannot understand, are no less repugnant to the old hardheaded materialist than independent judgment and the validity of moral standards is repugnant to the old-fashioned hardheaded sociologist and psychologist.
>
> Mechanisms are not as mechanical, and matter is not as material as each was once supposed to be. Mechanisms are not mechanical

because individual atoms do not always follow the so-called laws. Matter is not as material because it can be transformed into energy despite the fact that matter and energy were once supposed to be as irreducibly different as, say, reason and the brain which thinks that it reasons. The paradox of man who is both a body and a mind is no more implausible than the paradox of an atom which is both matter and force.

## Ancient Civilization in South America

Students interested in tracing the ancient cultures of South America to an origin in lost Atlantis will find interesting information in *Mysteries of Ancient South America,* by Harold T. Wilkins (American edition—Citadel Press, 1956). According to the publishers, "Mr. Wilkins' vast accumulation of data has been supplemented by an imaginative reconstruction of the strange, long-ago world so long imprisoned in the limbo of the forgotten past." Since it would require an archeologist or paleontologist to assess the "scientific" value of this book, we content ourselves with noting passages of interest to Theosophists.

## Catacombs of Cuzco

Although Mr. Wilkins nowhere mentions *Isis Unveiled* as his source-material, readers acquainted with that work cannot fail to notice the similarity between H. P. Blavatsky's account of the "mysterious catacombs" of Peru (*Isis* I, 595-6) and Mr. Wilkins' reconstruction:

> Somewhere about the year 1844 an old Catholic priest was called to shrive a dying Quichua Indian (direct descendant of the Inca Peruvians). It is the strange sequel to the closing of the subterranean, of which I spoke above.
>
> "Bend your ear down to my mouth, *taita,*" said the dying Indian, whose face was lined like an old parchment, "for I have something to tell you which is not for other ears."

## The Story Continues

> The story was about a mystery of a labyrinth and a series of amazing tunnels going back far beyond the days of the Inca emperors of the sun. It was told under the inviolable seal of the confessional and could not be divulged by the priest under pain of hell fire; and it would probably have remained a secret had not the old priest, in a trail of the mountains, come into the company of a sinister Italian, who was on his travels to Lima. This Italian, with very dark, piercing eyes, and a hypnotic stare, talked to the old priest, who, unwittingly, let drop a hint about a long-sought hidden and very ancient treasure. The

> sinister gentleman, said to have come from Naples, somehow managed to hypnotise the old priest, who was a native Quichua, into telling him the story the priest had learnt, under confession, from the dying Peruvian peasant. The latter had said that this strange secret was known to many pure-blooded Quichua Indians, descendants of the old Incas, but not to the half-caste mestizos, who were deemed unreliable.

### Source? or Corroboration?

Immediately following the foregoing account, we find this passage:

> Between the years 1848 and 1850, the well-known Russo-American mystic, Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatskaya, was travelling in Perú, which was as badly—or, perhaps, worse—infested with brigands than it is, in some regions, today. She was told something of this curious story by a Peruvian she met on a mountain trail, in the Andes; and in Lima she rather curiously encountered the very Italian who had hypnotised the old priest into breaking the seal of the confessional. . . . Madame Blavatskaya herself journeyed southwards from Lima to Arica. . . . It was a year or so after the story had been corroborated in her hearing, in different parts of Peru, and by people entirely unconnected.

### Editorial License

Mr. Wilkins quotes H.P.B.'s account of her second visit to Peru—found in *Isis* I, 547. The quotation is not verbatim with the original edition, but whether this is due to having been taken from an already corrupt edition or to Mr. Wilkins' dressing it up for popular consumption, we are unable to say. Mr. Wilkins then freely paraphrases the rest of the account as found on pages 597-8 of *Isis* I, not always indicating when he is following the author cited, and when he is either interpolating material from other sources or making observations of his own.

As a fair sample of Mr. Wilkins' technique of "imaginative reconstruction," we quote his final reference to "Madame Blavatskaya," together with her own account.

### A Tale that is Told

Mr. Wilkins asks: "For what purposes, however, were these amazingly long tunnels of old Peru intended? What mysterious cults did they serve?" He answers:

> A startling clue, gained in a very peculiar and romantic manner, to one of the purposes of these mysterious tunnels, and which is directly concerned with the mysterious stone city in the Lancandones territory, of which I have written elsewhere, came in the course of a chance talk between a very old Peruvian—a Quichua Indian—and the same well-known and American woman traveller, the late Madame Helena P. Blavatskaya, who, as one sees, was journeying through the mountains of Peru, in 1851 or 1853. The old Peruvian had passed all his life vainly trying to conceal his hatred towards the official Peruvians, and the Spanish conquerors. He called them *brigands.*
>
> "I keep friends with them, these *bandidos,*" he said, "and their Catholic missioners, for the sake of my own people. But I am as much a worshipper of the sun as if I had lived in the days of our murdered emperor, the Inca Atahuallha. Now, as a converted native and missionary, I once took a journey to Santa Cruz del Quiché (in Western Guatemala), and, when there, *I went to see some of my people by a subterranean passage leading into a mysterious city behind the cordilleras.* Herein, it is death for any white man to trespass!"
>
> Said Madame Blavatskaya: "We believe his story, as it is corroborated, elsewhere, by Stephens in his *Travels.* Besides, a man who is about to die will rarely stop to invent idle stories."

Madame Blavatsky "continues" in *Isis*:

> Nearly the same was given us personally about twenty years ago, by an old native priest, whom we met in Peru, and with whom we happened to have business relations. He had passed all his life vainly trying to conceal his hatred toward the conquerors—"brigands," he termed them; and, as he confessed, kept friends with them and the Catholic religion for the sake of his people, but he was as truly a sun-worshipper in his heart as ever he was. He had travelled in his capacity of a *converted* native missionary, and had been at Santa Cruz and, as he solemnly affirmed, had been also to see some of his people by a "subterranean passage" leading into the mysterious city. We believe his account; for a man who is about to die, will rarely stop to invent idle stories; and this one we have found corroborated in Stephen's *Travels.* (*Isis Unveiled* I, 547.)

As we have said, Mr. Wilkins may have drawn on sources other than *Isis* in the passages we have quoted, but his account, resembling so closely that of *Isis,* makes us wonder if he has not used "Madame Blavatskaya" for *more* than just corroboration.

## "QUEST FOR THE RECOVERY OF RELIGION"

We hear much these days about return to religion. What does this mean? Is it a return to the old dogmas?

Dr. Arnold Toynbee, distinguished historian, stated in a "Voice of America" broadcast (*U.S. News and World Report* for Oct. 24, 1956):

> I expect to see twentieth-century man set out on a quest for the recovery of religion. I believe that he will recover it. But I also believe that it will come back in forms that will be so different from the traditional forms that, at first sight, man's new religion may hardly be recognizable.

## A Spiritual Vacuum

Dr. Toynbee points out that since modern man's freedom will probably be more and more restricted on economic and political planes by the demands of the machine age, "human nature is sure to seek compensation by insisting on being given freedom in some other sphere." That sphere, he thinks, is religion:

> How is modern man going to fill the spiritual vacuum in his soul? This vacuum has been created by the rise of modern science. Science has expelled religion in its traditional forms; yet science, by itself, is incapable of filling the void.
>
> Man today is like an adolescent armed with an adult's weapons—without having attained to an adult's state of mind. He will be a danger to his fellows, and still more to himself, till he grows up spiritually to match his now-gigantic technological stature. But the way toward spiritual maturity runs not through science, but through religion.

## Kernel of Truth in all Religions

Dr. Toynbee does not feel that man's new religion will be something entirely new, however, for a *Life* editorial (April 11, 1955) quotes him as saying that the higher religions are variations on a single theme, so that if all the "components of this heavenly music of the spheres could be audible on earth simultaneously, and with equal clarity, to any pair of human ears, the happy hearer would find himself listening, not to a discord, but to a harmony." The editors of *Life* seem to concur:

> Many a man is secretly or openly engaged in the same search, the search for what Thomas Wolfe called "a scone, a leaf, a door . . . the lost lane-end into Heaven." But where is the door? . . . Christ taught sacrifice as the road to spiritual riches. But what door did He show? "I am the way," He said, "the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

> That is surely a simple statement, yet few words present more difficulties for the modern mind. Does it mean that one church only, or one faith only, is the way to God? Taken literally, it would damn all those saintly men who have reached God through other religions —the way of the Tao, of Hinduism, of Gautama or Mohammed. A God so parochial as to exclude these alien saints from His kingdom does not sound like the God of mercy whom Christ preached.
>
> As readers of *Life's* series on the Great Religions are aware, Christianity is not the only framework of a truly spiritual life. The comparative study of the higher religions breeds respect for them all and has led learned men to find in all of them "some truth."

## MAN'S FUTURE RELIGION

How shall we know that man's coming religion is true? asks Dr. Toynbee in the "Voice of America" program. "The touchstone of religion is its capacity to deal with the problem of suffering, and our sufferings seem likely to be great in the testing time that lies ahead." H. P. Blavatsky would apparently agree, for she stated in "Is Theosophy a Religion?":

> To Theosophists . . . who accept no mediation by proxy, no salvation through innocent bloodshed, nor would they think of "working for wages" in the *One Universal* religion, the only definition they could subscribe to and accept in full is one given by Miller. How truly and theosophically he describes it, by showing that
>
> . . . true Religion
> Is always mild, propitious and humble;
> Plays not *the tyrant,* plants *no faith in blood,*
> Nor bears destruction on her chariot wheels;
> But stoops to polish, succor and redress,
> And *builds her grandeur on the public good.*

## PSYCHOTHERAPY AND PHANTOM PAIN

In "Psychotherapy of Phantom Limb Pain in Two Patients" (*Psychiatric Quarterly* for January), Dr. A. M. Blood, of the Oschner Clinic, New Orleans, discusses two cases in order to "call attention to certain anxieties that occur in amputees and to show how psychotherapy can be of help."It is natural, probably, that doctors in general consider pain "in" an amputated limb to be psychogenic, due largely to anxiety or other emotional factors. It is equally clear to a student of Theosophy, however, that it may be a "feeling" in the astral member which is interpreted by the brain as physical pain. Certainly this latter

interpretation is suggested by the recollections of one of the patients during a psychiatric interview:

> He recalled that, when he was 17 years old, a man in his neighborhood had had to have an arm amputated. Cramping phantom pain developed at the elbow. The arm was exhumed, the story went on, was found to be flexed, was straightened out and reburied, whereupon the phantom pain disappeared. Another man had told him about a phantom sensation of ants stinging a finger which had been dismembered in an automobile accident; the amputee returned to the scene of the accident, recovered the finger and actually found ants on it, whereupon the phantom pain ceased. The patient then said that since his first amputation he had had phantom sensations which had diminished in intensity but still required aspirin and codeine. For 10 months after the operation the sole of the foot itched and he would reach to scratch it. The phantom sensation of a sore "corn" on the small toe persisted. The "corn" had existed in actuality.

### Anxiety-Factor

Dr. Blood discovered that the victims of amputation felt most anxiety over the disposal of the amputated part, even when they declared they felt none. Indeed, the anxiety of the first patient discussed was so marked that Dr. Blood went to some trouble to learn the method of disposal. On being told that the amputated leg and foot had been cremated, Dr. Blood so reported to the patient, who then exhibited marked relief.

The second patient Dr. Blood discusses became "panicky" when asked if he knew what disposal had been made of the amputated limb, declaring he did not want to know. Later he said he had wanted to ask, but was "afraid of being laughed at."

### "Explanation" of Phantom Pain

Phantom pain usually lasts for two or three years, according to Dr. Blood, and "occurs in a high percentage of patients whose extremities have been amputated." Then it gradually subsides, to be felt only on occasion of physical or emotional upset. The phantom pains, variously described by amputees, are explained in "neurologic, psychologic and psychiatric terms" as follows:

> The neurologic concept is that of the body image in space, which obtained from multiple perceptions, built up through the years by continuous postural, tactile and optic sensory impressions. The phan-

tom appendage represents the organized impression of a person's image of his body before loss of the limb. As time goes by, the phantom shrinks as the image of the body is reorganized through new sensory impressions. Gestalt psychologic theory supports the existence of a tendency to perceive objects as a whole, and this would be illustrated by persistence of the total image of the body. Psychiatrically, the phantom limb has been interpreted as a wish-fulfilling hallucination, having as its function denial of loss of the part and the painful affect related to the loss.

Theories of pain in a phantom part account for it as of cerebral or peripheral origin. The theories of peripheral origin maintain that there is a persisting stimulus, at the site of the severed nerve in the stump, which sets off volleys of painful sensory impressions. The fact that many operations have been used and that their results, in general, have been unsatisfactory for relief of phantom pain, throws a dubious light on the peripheral theory. The cerebral theories assume that the pain is due to psychologic mechanisms.

## CORRELATION WITH THEOSOPHICAL TEACHING

The following passages from W. Q. Judge and H.P.B. may be correlated with Dr. Blood's discussion:

> The astral body has within it the real organs of the outer sense organs. In it are the sight, hearing, power to smell, and the sense of touch. It has a complete system of nerves and arteries of its own for the conveyance of the astral fluid which is to that body as our blood is to the physical. It is the real personal man. There are located the subconscious perception and the latent memory. . . . Where we find a man who still feels the leg which the surgeon has cut off, or perceives the fingers that were amputated, then the astral member has not been interfered with, and hence the man feels as if it were still on his person. For knife or acid will not injure the astral model. (*Ocean,* pp. 42, 41.)

> The viability of the astral form is so feeble, that the particles cannot cohere firmly when once it is slipped out of the unyielding capsule of the external body. Its particles, *gradually* obeying the disorganizing attraction of universal space, *finally* fly asunder beyond the possibility of reaggregation. (*Isis* I, 432; italics ours.)

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*"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect; yet belongs to each and all."*

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*Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.*

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